

Unitarian Church,  
Geneva, Illinois

HABS No. Ill-184

HABS  
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*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District No. Ill.1.

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Earl H. Reed, District Officer  
435 North Michigan Ave., Chicago.

OLD UNITARIAN CHURCH  
Geneva, Kane County, Illinois

Owner - Geneva Unitarian Society

Date of Erection - 1843

Builders - L. and D. Howard and James Smart built the building for the Unitarian Society.

Present Condition - The church is in very good condition and is still used by the Society. Many Changes have been made since it was built, including enlargement, addition of the belfry and replacing the window glass. Worn timbers have been replaced from time to time and the building has been covered with cement plaster. None of the original fixtures remain inside.

Number of Stories - One and Belfry

Materials of Construction - The walls and foundations built of rubble stone and later covered with cement plaster are 20 inches thick. A brick chimney rests on one of the roof trusses and joists. The belfry, roof shingles and entrance vestibule are of wood and the lintels of cut stone. The interior walls and ceilings are plastered.

Other Existing Records - Church records of the Geneva Unitarian Society and publications by "The Western Unitarian".

Additional Data - Secured from the Geneva Unitarian Society.

The First Unitarian Society of Geneva, Illinois was organized under the name of the "First Christian Congregation of Geneva" on June 12th, 1842. On May 20th, 1843 a meeting was held for soliciting funds and a building committee appointed as follows: Scotto Clark, Secretary and Treasurer; Leonard Carr, Amasa White, Charles Patten and Samuel K. Whiting. Contributions were furnished by the American Unitarian Association, Roxbury, Mass. and friends in Boston.

A resolution to build a church was voted July 30th, 1843 and on January 24th, 1844 the building was dedicated with about 140 persons present. The lot cost \$22.00. Records show that on September 30th, 1843, \$225.00 was paid L. & D. Howard and \$60.69 to James Smart on contract for finishing the church.

On June 3rd, 1855 funds were raised and a building committee appointed for enlarging the church. It was decided to lower the balcony and the contractor was paid June 5th, 1856. No Mention was made as to the extent of the alterations but the original church had no belfry and extended only to the middle of the present fourth window. The main church roof, including shingles, extends under the belfry. Initials CWRD and the date 1863 on one of the timbers would indicate that the belfry was built prior to that date and was probably included in the repairs of 1855.

Many creeds, including Catholic and Christian Science Societies have used the church during the past twenty five years, but it is now being used by the Unitarian Society.

By Margaret A. Jones

Approved Edw. Wood